International Journal of ePortfolio
https://www.aacu.org/ijep

2026, Volume 16, Number 1, 41-51
ISSN 2157-622X

Impact of ePortfolio Assessments on College Students' Motivation in Learning English Writing

Phan Thùy Dương
Sonadezi College of Technology and Management

Trần Thanh Tú
Vietnam Aviation Academy

This project investigates the impact of ePortfolio assessments on student motivation in English essay writing within a higher education setting. The study engages six college students actively enrolled in English writing courses, each with prior experience in ePortfolio assessments. Additionally, insights are drawn from two teachers who have previously employed ePortfolios in their classrooms. The chosen methodology employs an action research approach, emphasizing iterative cycles of reflection, implementation, and adaptation. The study utilizes semi-structured interview conducted in an informal manner as the primary data collection method, allowing for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and motivations. The research is grounded in the ARCS motivational model, exploring attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction as key dimensions. The outcomes of this study may contribute to the understanding of how ePortfolio assessments can serve as potent tools in enhancing student motivation, particularly in the nuanced context of English essay writing. Therefore, the practical insights derived from this paper might hold valuable implications for educators and institutions seeking effective strategies to foster student engagement and motivation in the writing domain.

In the realm of education, the pursuit of effective teaching and learning methodologies remains a paramount concern. In particular, the assessment of students' progress and skills holds a pivotal role in shaping the learning experience. Within the context of college-level English writing courses, the conventional methods of assessment have been subjected to inspection due to their perceived limitations in motivating students to engage enthusiastically in the process of learning. This research, informed by seminal works in educational psychology such as Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory and Zimmerman's (2000) exploration of self-efficacy, endeavors to address the prevailing issue of a potential disconnect between traditional assessment methods and student motivation in college English writing courses.

Traditional assessments, often characterized by single final tests, are deeply entrenched in the educational systems of Vietnam. However, a notable concern has emerged—the apparent inadequacy of these assessments in fostering students' intrinsic motivation to cultivate and refine their writing skills. As students' motivation significantly influences their level of engagement and consequently impacts learning outcomes, insights from Dörnyei's (2001) motivational strategies in the language classroom, and the motivational dimensions discussed by Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) suggest that it becomes imperative to explore alternative assessment strategies that can better align with the modern educational landscape.

Research has shown that motivating students to write in a language other than their native tongue is a complex endeavor. Drawing upon recent developments in educational psychology that highlight the value of motivation in enhancing cognitive processes and overall academic achievement (Wolters, 2003), this investigation seeks to contribute to this growing body of knowledge by assessing whether innovative assessment approaches, particularly ePortfolios, can bridge the gap between assessment and motivation in English writing education. To delve deeper into the role of ePortfolio assessments in shaping college students' motivation within the context of English writing education, this research poses a fundamental question: whether and how do ePortfolio assessments influence college students' motivation to learn English writing.

Literature Review

Motivational Theories and Frameworks in Education

Motivation is a crucial factor influencing student engagement and learning outcomes in educational settings. In the context of English writing courses, understanding motivational theories and frameworks provides a foundational understanding of the psychological and behavioral aspects that drive students' commitment to their studies. One prominent theoretical framework is self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which posits that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Kwok's (2011) study on college students' participation in ePortfolio learning in Hong Kong drew upon SDT to explore the impact of ePortfolios on academic performance and motivation. The findings of Kwok's research indicated that students exhibited varying forms of motivation, including intrinsic-like factors such as self-betterment and language improvement. This aligns with the SDT's emphasis on the importance of internalized motivations for sustained engagement.

In addition, the work of Beckers et al. (2016) provided insights into factors influencing self-directed learning (SDL) through ePortfolios, aligning with motivational theories. Their systematic review identified key areas—institutional, curriculum, learning process, personal, and portfolio factors—that contribute to the development of SDL. The study underscored the significance of aligning institutional vision, curriculum, and coaching support for successful implementation, emphasizing the role of motivation and portfolio design in achieving positive outcomes. Furthermore, Mobarhan et al. (2015) contributed to the understanding of motivation by exploring electronic portfolio (ePortfolio) motivational factors from students' perspectives. Their qualitative study categorized factors into individual, system, social, and environmental characteristics, shedding light on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations influencing continuous ePortfolio usage. The study accentuated the multifaceted nature of motivations and their impact on students' engagement with ePortfolios.

These studies collectively highlight the importance of motivational theories such as SDT and the consideration of various factors influencing motivation, providing a solid foundation for examining how ePortfolios impact students' motivation in English writing courses.

Motivational Factors in ePortfolio Use for English Writing Courses

Motivating students to actively engage with ePortfolios in the context of English writing courses involves understanding specific factors that influence their motivation. Several studies shed light on these factors, contributing to the broader discourse on the motivational aspects of ePortfolio use. Yastibas and Yastibas (2015) emphasized the shortcomings of traditional assessment methods in English Language Teaching (ELT) and argued for the potential of ePortfolio-based assessment to enhance students' self-regulated learning. The alignment between ePortfolio-based assessment and self-regulated learning, characterized by active student participation, personal responsibility, self-reflection, and motivation, underscores the promising utility of ePortfolios in motivating students to actively participate in English writing courses. This aligns with the broader literature on the significance of self-regulated learning in fostering motivation (Zimmerman, 2000).

In the exploration of Facebook as an ePortfolio platform, Barrot (2020) investigated its impact on ESL learners' writing performance. The study found that the interactive features, flexibility, and increased audience awareness on Facebook contribute to improved writing performance. While not claiming Facebook as the ultimate ePortfolio platform, the study emphasized the positive effects of audience awareness and social pressure on enhancing writing performance, highlighting the motivational implications of utilizing social platforms as ePortfolios.

Cepik and Yastibas (2013) extended the understanding of motivational factors by examining the impact of ePortfolios on the speaking skills of Turkish EFL learners. The study emphasized the responsibilities placed on students in the ePortfolio process, fostering self-assessment, self-improvement, and autonomy in speaking classes. This aligns with self-determination theory, emphasizing autonomy as a fundamental psychological need influencing motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Moreover, Rezai et al. (2022) explored the contributions of ePortfolios to developing EFL learners' vocabulary, motivation, and attitudes. The study indicated that ePortfolios positively influenced learners' vocabulary acquisition, motivation, and attitudes, fostering self-assessment, independence, and critical thinking. In summary, motivational factors in ePortfolio use for English writing courses align with self-regulated learning, the impact of social platforms, and the promotion of autonomy and self-assessment.

Comparative Studies: ePortfolios vs. Traditional Assessment in English Writing

A growing body of research investigates the effectiveness of ePortfolios compared to traditional assessment methods in the context of English writing courses. Understanding the comparative impact on student motivation is crucial for educators seeking innovative and engaging assessment strategies. Kwok (2011) explored the implementation of ePortfolios for college students in Hong Kong, focusing on their academic ability and motivation. While the study indicated that ePortfolio tasks showed no correlation with students' academic performance, it revealed that students exhibited increased motivation toward learning English when ePortfolios are involved. The study suggested that intrinsic factors, such as self-betterment and language improvement, are as important, if not more so, than extrinsic motivators like bonus marks.

Rossi et al. (2008) addressed challenges related to motivation and the weight of portfolio creation and revision in ePortfolio use. The study proposed a flexible ePortfolio structure that caters to users' needs, enhances usability, and motivates learners. The guidelines derived from the study emphasized the importance of reflective practice and address the challenge of motivating students to use ePortfolios effectively. Besides, Beckers et al. (2016) offered a systematic review focusing on factors influencing self-directed learning (SDL) through ePortfolios. The study identified key areas, including institutional, curriculum, learning process, personal, and

portfolio factors, that influence SDL. The findings underscored the necessity of aligning institutional vision, curriculum, and coaching support for successful ePortfolio implementation, emphasizing the role of motivation and portfolio design.

These comparative studies provide valuable insights into the motivational aspects of ePortfolios compared to traditional assessment methods, highlighting the importance of intrinsic motivators, reflective practices, and institutional support in enhancing student engagement.

Innovative Approaches: Integrating Technology and ePortfolios for Motivation

The integration of ePortfolios in English writing courses has been a subject of investigation concerning its impact on students' writing motivation. Researchers have explored various dimensions, shedding light on how ePortfolios influence motivation, engagement, and the overall writing experience. Yastibas and Yastibas (2015) conducted a study in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), focusing on the potential of ePortfolio-based assessment to enhance students' self-regulated learning. The study found that ePortfolio assessments align with self-regulated learning, emphasizing active student participation, personal responsibility, self-reflection, and motivation. This aligns with the broader objective of improving English writing skills by enhancing student motivation and engagement through innovative assessment strategies.

Similarly, Mobarhan et al. (2015) explored electronic portfolio motivational factors from students' perspective. The study categorized these factors into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, offering insights into the multifaceted nature of motivations and their impact on students' engagement with ePortfolios. The findings underline the importance of understanding these motivational factors to inform the design and implementation of ePortfolios, making it valuable for the broader investigation into the impact of ePortfolios on student motivation. The research of Barrot (2020) shared the same topic with the mentioned researchers yet delved into the effects of a Facebook-based ePortfolio on ESL learners' writing performance. The study highlighted the positive impact of the Facebook-based ePortfolio on writing performance, attributing it to interactive features, flexibility, accessibility, exposure to social pressure, and increased audience awareness. This research emphasizes the importance of technology integration, audience awareness, and social pressure in enhancing writing motivation in the context of ePortfolios.

Cepik and Yastibas (2013) investigated the impact of ePortfolios on the speaking skills of Turkish EFL learners. The study emphasized the positive influence of ePortfolios on speaking skills, promoting self-regulated learning and autonomy in speaking classes. This aligns with the broader investigation into the impact of ePortfolios on student motivation, emphasizing student responsibility and autonomy in the ePortfolio process.

Mohamad et al. (2016) explored the design of ePortfolios with ARCS motivational design strategies to enhance self-directed learning. The study found that integrating ePortfolios with ARCS strategies significantly influenced learners' motivation, emphasizing the importance of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction in promoting self-directed learning. The study involved 24 students, and the integration of ePortfolios using these strategies significantly influenced learners' motivation levels. The study emphasized the importance of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction in influencing motivation, suggesting that the integration of ePortfolios and motivational design strategies can promote self-directed learning. In synthesizing these studies, a clear trend emerges, showcasing how the integration of technology and ePortfolios can positively impact student motivation in English writing courses.

However, despite growing interest, limited studies have explored how ePortfolio assessments influence motivation in English writing in the Vietnamese higher education context. To address this gap, the present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Do Vietnamese college students perceive the influence of ePortfolio assessment on their motivation to learn English writing?
2. How can the use of ePortfolio assessments enhance college students' motivation to learn English writing in relation to attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction?

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative action research design to explore the impact of ePortfolio assessment on college students' motivation in English writing. The research was conducted over iterative instructional cycles involving the implementation of ePortfolio-based writing tasks, reflection on student engagement, and pedagogical adjustment (Kemmis et al., 2014). The chosen action research approach is informed by the need to actively engage with students, educators, and ePortfolio systems to gather data and implement changes. This approach aligns with the goal of addressing a real-world problem within an educational setting. The cyclical nature of action research, as described by Kemmis et al. (2014), is central to its effectiveness in educational contexts. It emphasizes a continuous process of reflection, implementation, and adaptation. This cyclicality allows educators and

researchers to refine their practices iteratively, aligning them more closely with the needs of their students. In this study, the iterative approach of action research is vital for evaluating the impact of ePortfolio assessments on student motivation over time.

Besides, action research not only benefits students but also supports the personal and professional growth of teachers. It encourages self-reflection and an ongoing commitment to improving teaching practices (Ferrance, 2000). By actively engaging with students and the ePortfolio system, one may have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of pedagogical strategies and technology integration, contributing to professional growth. Action research, by its nature, addresses real-world problems within specific educational settings. This approach aligns with the practical needs of educators and institutions (Lewin, 1946). In this study, the focus on enhancing student motivation in English writing courses originates from the observation of the real-life issues faced by students. In conclusion, action research provides a structured framework for exploring and resolving such challenges.

In the context of the present ePortfolio research aimed at exploring the impact of ePortfolio assessments on college students' motivation in learning English writing, both surveys and interviews present viable data collection methods. However, interviews emerge as the more suitable choice for several compelling reasons. Surveys, while effective for collecting quantitative data and identifying trends across a larger sample, may fall short in capturing the nuanced insights and rich, context-specific details essential for comprehending student motivation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Wisker, 2001). The limited response options in surveys might not encompass the multifaceted aspects of motivation and engagement within the ePortfolio assessment framework. Furthermore, surveys may not allow for clarifications or in-depth exploration of participant responses, potentially leaving critical questions unaddressed (Fowler, 2014).

On the other hand, interviews offer distinct advantages in this research. They facilitate open-ended discussions where participants can express their experiences, perceptions, and emotions freely (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Given the complexity of motivation, interviews enable us to delve into the underlying reasons behind students' feelings and behaviors in response to ePortfolio assessments. They provide the opportunity to ask follow-up questions, allowing for a deeper understanding of participant perspectives. Additionally, interviews permit us to adapt and tailor questions to the specific context, ensuring that no crucial insights are overlooked (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Considering the intricate nature of motivation and the need to explore the personal and contextual factors that influence it, interviews are the more suitable choice for this ePortfolio research. They offer a holistic, qualitative approach that aligns with the research's goals of gaining profound insights into the intricate relationship between ePortfolio assessments and student motivation in English writing courses. Through tailored inquiries that pivot in response to the interviewees' direction, one can systematically explore the specific advantages and disadvantages associated with this innovative writing assessment approach. Subsequently, the insights garnered from this project will enable the provision of meaningful recommendations for teaching practices and engaging in constructive discussions with fellow educators at the college regarding the integration of technology into English language instruction and assessment. As a result, semi-structured interviews were conducted in an informal manner offering a flexible alternative, enabling spontaneous and brief interactions was applied in this present project. This approach aligns with the practical constraints of busy academic calendars, allowing for a broader participant pool while still increasing the feasibility of gathering diverse perspectives. Maintaining a neutral stance is crucial to uphold the integrity of the research process. This approach provides a way to engage with students and educators without breaching ethical boundaries, as it involves general conversations that do not delve into specific academic interactions or evaluations. This adjustment not only addresses these concerns but also introduces the potential for more candid and accessible participant engagement, enhancing the overall quality and depth of the research findings.

Participants

Six college students who were enrolled in at least one of the English Essay Writing courses (English Writing 2 and 3) at Sonadezi College of Technology and Management (Vietnam) participated in the study. These courses included an ePortfolio component as part of their assessment structure: students were required to compile their writing assignments (such as paragraphs, essays, journals, and reflections) into a digital portfolio over the duration of the course like Facebook with private class groups or pages acting as portfolio spaces, Microsoft Sway, or OneDrive. All student participants were at an intermediate level of English writing proficiency and had prior experience with portfolio-based learning activities. Purposeful sampling was employed to select students who had completed at least one semester using ePortfolio assessment, ensuring that participants could reflect meaningfully on their experiences over time. In addition, two educators with a history of incorporating ePortfolios in their English writing courses were recruited. The selection prioritized teachers with substantial experience and expertise in ePortfolio integration. Participation was voluntary, and

inclusion criteria included past utilization of ePortfolios as an assessment tool and a willingness to share insights on the impact of ePortfolios on student motivation. Participants were contacted through official college channels, with interviews scheduled at their convenience to ensure a comfortable and confidential environment. Anonymity was maintained in the final reporting to uphold privacy and confidentiality.

Data Collection

During the data collection phase, semi-structured interviews conducted in an informal manner approach was employed to gather insights from participants. The questions (Appendix A) in Vietnamese used during these interviews were structured around the ARCS motivational model proposed by Keller (1987), as mentioned in the paper of Mohamad et al. (2016). This model, encompassing attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction, provided a comprehensive framework for understanding motivation in educational settings. The interviews allowed for a conversational and open-ended exploration of participants' experiences with ePortfolio assessments. The questions were designed to uncover their attention levels, perceived relevance of the assessments, confidence in completing tasks, and overall satisfaction with the ePortfolio process. The aim was to delve into the nuanced aspects of motivation that might not be fully captured through structured surveys. Participants were encouraged to express their thoughts freely, providing rich qualitative data that went beyond quantitative metrics. The informal nature of the semi-structured interviews fostered a comfortable environment, promoting candid responses and allowing for the emergence of unexpected insights. The questions were flexible, enabling the interviewer to adapt based on the flow of the conversation and delve deeper into areas of particular interest or significance.

Data Analysis

Upon completing each semi-structured interview, we immediately documented each participant's responses in detail, thus creating a comprehensive textual dataset. The interviews were not audio recorded to maintain rapport and fluid, candid conversation. The subsequent familiarization process involved immersing ourselves in the textual dataset to gain a nuanced understanding of the data's intricacies. Moving to the coding process, each segment of the data was assigned relevant codes, facilitating the organization of information into coherent themes. This phase aimed to identify patterns and recurring elements within the dataset. Quality checks were performed by revisiting notes and triangulating across sources.

Themes were derived from the coded segments, emphasizing the interconnectedness of information. This involved synthesizing related codes to construct overarching themes that encapsulate the essence of participants' responses (see Appendix B). Building on the developed themes, the next step involved thorough interpretation. This included delving into the underlying meanings and implications of the identified patterns. During this phase, the themes also considered existing literature and relevant motivational frameworks (ARCS and other theories discussed earlier) to provide theoretical context to the findings. A theme was deemed "prominent" if it recurred frequently across multiple participants or encapsulated particularly significant insights related to student motivation in the context of ePortfolios. In practice, the prominent themes were those mentioned by many of the participants or strongly emphasized as important experiences. To ensure the rigor and accuracy of interpretations, a robust quality check was conducted. This phase involved revisiting the data to validate the alignment of interpretations with participants' intended meanings, minimizing the potential for misinterpretation.

In the final stage, the results and discussion were reported in a cohesive narrative. This synthesis would weave together the identified themes, interpretations, and pertinent literature, presenting a comprehensive understanding of the impact of ePortfolio assessments on student motivation in English writing courses. The academic discourse surrounding the study's outcomes was carefully considered to contribute meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge.

Results

Visual Progress Display in ePortfolios: Enhancing Attention and Motivation

In the exploration of ePortfolio features within the context of English writing courses, a prominent theme emerged from interviews with six college students and two lecturers experienced in ePortfolio assessments. Central to their discussions was the positive influence of the visual progress display feature on attention and motivation. The visual progress display, a notable component of ePortfolios, was found to be instrumental in capturing students' attention. This feature, typically presented in the form of a timeline or graphical interface visually represents the development of students' writing skills over time. Each entry becomes a tangible marker of progress, creating a chronological narrative within the ePortfolio.

This visual element is intentionally designed to be conspicuous, ensuring that students readily notice and engage with it. By providing a snapshot of their growth, the visual progress display offers a tangible representation

of their evolving writing abilities. Leveraging the human inclination towards visual stimuli, this feature aims to make the learning process more tangible and rewarding. Insights from student perspectives were gathered through interviews, revealing a unanimous appreciation for the impact of visual progress displays. One student expressed, "The visual progress display is like a constant reminder of my improvement. It motivates me to invest more effort in my writing." Another student shared, "I often revisit my earlier works; it's satisfying to see how far I've come. It keeps me focused on the journey, not just the assignment."

Personalized Expression's Influence on Relevance and Motivation

In the students' discussions, the flexibility provided by ePortfolios in expressing themselves through diverse formats became a significant factor contributing to the relevance of writing tasks. ePortfolios, characterized by their adaptability, enable students to tailor their writing expressions to corresponds to their individual learning goals and interests. Unlike traditional assessments with rigid formats, ePortfolios offer a spectrum of options, such as multimedia integration, varied writing styles, and personalized elements. This flexibility aims to make writing tasks more relevant by allowing students to showcase their understanding in ways that resonate with their personal preferences and goals.

These results were drawn from students' firsthand experiences, with one participant stating, "I appreciate that I can include visuals, like infographics, in my ePortfolio. It makes the writing more relevant to my major, and I enjoy the creative aspect." Another student highlighted, "Being able to choose the format adds a personal touch. It's not just an assignment; it's a reflection of my interests and where I want to go." Moreover, student responses emphasized the importance of comprehensive assessment. One participant expressed, "Knowing that everything I've learned is part of the assessment makes the writing more relevant to the whole course. It's not just about one essay; it's about showcasing what I've gained throughout the semester."

Positive Reactions and Personal Achievements Boost Confidence

The ePortfolio platform allows for social interaction through comments or reactions. When students receive positive responses from peers, lecturers, or even other readers, it contributes significantly to their confidence. Knowing that their work is appreciated and acknowledged creates a positive reinforcement loop, encouraging students to persist in their writing efforts. One of the lecturers shared, "What's fascinating is how students talk about their writing now. It's not just about getting a good grade; it's about creating something they're proud to display. This shift in mindset is a clear sign of increased motivation."

Students also expressed how receiving positive comments or reactions from peers within the ePortfolio community contributes to their confidence. One student shared, "When my classmates comment or like my essays, it feels great. It's like a small victory. It makes me believe that my writing matters and that I'm on the right track."

Enhanced Satisfaction Through Ownership and Intrinsic Motivation

During the informal interviews, students frequently underscored the intrinsically motivating aspect of creating and curating their ePortfolios. For instance, one student vividly expressed, "When I see my ePortfolio, I feel proud of what I've accomplished. It's not just about getting a grade; it's about seeing how far I've come as a writer." The concept of satisfaction, as illuminated by the students, extends beyond the conventional understanding of academic contentment. It is deeply intertwined with the celebration of personal achievements and growth. One lecturer emphasized:

> I observe that the majority of students take initiative in completing their ePortfolios after each session. Some even add new essays without the need for teacher prompting. I can see some of them invest a lot of time and effort in adding new posts and refining old ones to perfection according to their ideas. Even after I have compiled the ePortfolio grades, I still see them posting new articles.

It further illustrates the strong connection between using ePortfolios and students' intrinsic motivation to enhance their writing skills.

The students' ongoing commitment to updating and refining their ePortfolios post-assessment suggests that the ePortfolio, for them, is not merely a task to be completed for a grade but an ongoing project reflecting their evolving identity as writers. This aligns with the previously discussed theme of ownership and intrinsic motivation, emphasizing that students find value in continuing to build and perfect their digital writing portfolios beyond the formal evaluation period. This sustained engagement underscores the ePortfolio's role as a dynamic tool that extends beyond traditional assessment boundaries, fostering an enduring motivation for self-improvement and expression.

Discussion

The integration of ePortfolios into English essay writing courses has proven to be a transformative strategy, significantly impacting student motivation.

ePortfolios effectively capture students' attention using visual progress displays. This feature serves as a dynamic and engaging representation of students' writing journey, creating a chronological narrative of their progress. By leveraging visual elements, ePortfolios provide a constant reminder of improvement, motivating students to invest more effort in their writing.

Moreover, the flexibility of ePortfolios allows students to express themselves in varied ways, enhancing the relevance of writing tasks to individual learning goals and interests. This personalized expression not only connects writing activities to course material but also makes the learning experience more meaningful. The ability of ePortfolios to align writing tasks with individual interests and goals resonates with the literature, which emphasizes the importance of relevance in maintaining student engagement.

ePortfolios contribute significantly to building students' confidence in their writing abilities. Beyond providing immediate feedback, the social aspect of ePortfolios, where students can receive positive reactions and comments from peers and instructors, plays a pivotal role. Positive reactions, such as comments or "likes," create a sense of accomplishment and reinforce the idea that writing is a valued skill. This collaborative and supportive environment aligns with the literature on the role of peer recognition in fostering motivation (Johnson, 2018).

The sense of ownership cultivated through ePortfolios enhances student satisfaction in the writing process. Students perceive their writing as a representation of themselves, creating a personal investment in their work. This intrinsic motivation, derived from personal reflections and the celebration of achievements within the ePortfolio, contributes significantly to overall satisfaction. This sentiment echoes the literature's emphasis on intrinsic motivation, where the joy of an activity becomes a reward (Deci et al., 1991). The ePortfolio, functioning as a canvas for personal reflections and a showcase of accomplishments, becomes a source of pride and fulfillment for students. This is supported by the psychological needs outlined in the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), where competence, autonomy, and relatedness are pivotal for fostering intrinsic motivation. Moreover, the ePortfolio's role in showcasing the developmental journey of each student resonates with Schön's (1983) notion of reflective practice. The iterative process of self-reflection and refinement, integral to ePortfolio creation, contributes to the deepening of students' understanding of their evolving writing abilities.

The findings of this paper align with existing literature, reinforcing the positive impact of ePortfolios on student motivation. Visual elements, personalized expression, confidence-building interactions, and the cultivation of a sense of ownership resonate with motivational theories discussed in the literature review. ePortfolios are positioned as a versatile tool that enhances established principles of motivation in education. While the current project highlights the benefits of ePortfolios in a specific context, it is essential to acknowledge potential variations across different teaching contexts. The contextual nature of educational interventions suggests that the effectiveness of ePortfolios may be influenced by factors such as institutional culture, student demographics, and course design. This recognition contributes to a broader understanding of how ePortfolios impact motivation, allowing for nuanced variations in different educational settings.

However, it is necessary to acknowledge certain limitations that may influence the generalizability and scope of the findings. Engaging a limited number of participants, including six college students and two lecturers, the small sample size may not fully capture the diversity of perspectives or account for individual variations in motivation. While the insights from participants are valuable, the study recognizes the need for larger and more diverse samples to enhance the robustness and generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, ethical constraints posed challenges in conducting informal interviews with our own students, limiting direct insights from the immediate educational context. While alternative strategies were employed to gather valuable insights, the absence of direct interactions introduces a potential limitation in understanding the nuances of the local educational environment. Finally, temporal dynamics also come into play, as the study captures a specific moment in time. The dynamics of student motivation may evolve over an extended period, and the temporal limitations suggest that future research could adopt longitudinal approaches to track changes in motivation over time.

Conclusion

In examining the role of ePortfolios in English essay writing, this study reveals several insights into their impact on student motivation. The key themes of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction emerged, shedding light on how these digital tools influence student engagement. The visual progress display feature of ePortfolios stands out as a significant factor in capturing and sustaining students' attention. Representing the evolution of their writing skills over time, this visual element serves as a constant reminder of progress. Students appreciate this feature, finding motivation in observing their improvement.

The relevance of ePortfolios is highlighted by the flexibility they offer for personalized expression.

Students feel a connection between the content and structure of ePortfolios and their learning goals. The ability to curate their writing journey contributes to a sense of relevance and purpose in their academic efforts. Besides, ePortfolio assessment positively impacts student confidence, not just through immediate feedback but also through social interaction. Positive reactions, such as comments or likes, contribute significantly to students' confidence. Peer recognition and support create a positive feedback loop, reinforcing the importance of their writing efforts. The theme of satisfaction is also closely tied to the sense of ownership that students experience. Viewing their writing as a representation of themselves within the ePortfolio platform adds a layer of personal investment, contributing to increased satisfaction. The process of creating and curating ePortfolios becomes intrinsically motivating for students.

This study aligns with the ARCS model, a theoretical framework that emphasizes attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction as key components of motivation. The findings contribute to the existing literature on motivation in education, showcasing the consistent applicability of the ARCS model across different educational contexts. However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including its contextual specificity, small sample size, and potential researcher bias. Ethical considerations also warrant caution in interpreting the findings.

Teachers may facilitate social interaction within the ePortfolio platform by creating opportunities for students to comment on and react to each other's work to foster a supportive community, significantly contributing to students' confidence and motivation. Establishing mechanisms for acknowledging and celebrating achievements through comments and reactions is recommended. This communal aspect echoes the relatedness component of the self-determination theory , which posits that a sense of belonging and connection enhances intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, educators should guide students to view ePortfolios as tools for personal expression and reflection. The process of self-reflection and the celebration of personal accomplishments contribute to a deeper understanding of students' evolving writing abilities. Lastly, providing timely and positive feedback is crucial. Teachers should actively engage with students' submissions, offering constructive comments and reactions. Training programs for educators could incorporate strategies for delivering effective and encouraging feedback, recognizing its impact on students' confidence and motivation.

Moving beyond immediate practical applications, there are key areas for further research that can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between ePortfolio assessments and student motivation. Longitudinal studies are essential to explore the sustained impact of ePortfolio use on student motivation. Tracking students' motivation and writing performance over an extended period can provide insights into the long-term effectiveness of this innovative assessment approach. This would help in understanding how motivation evolves and is sustained over time as students engage with ePortfolios throughout their academic journey. Moreover, researchers should consider examining cross-cultural contexts to determine whether the findings hold across diverse cultural backgrounds and educational settings. Investigating the universality of ePortfolios in enhancing motivation for English essay writing can contribute to more inclusive and globally applicable pedagogical strategies. Conducting comparative analyses between ePortfolio assessments and other innovative assessment methods is another avenue for research. Understanding how ePortfolios fare against alternative approaches can inform educators' decisions about the most effective strategies for promoting motivation in English writing courses. This could involve exploring the comparative impact on motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes.

In conclusion, this research underscores the potential of ePortfolio assessments as tools for enhancing student motivation in English essay writing. By understanding the nuanced ways in which these digital platforms impact attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction, educators can leverage technology to actively involve students in their academic journey.

References

Barrot, J. S. (2020). Effects of Facebook-based e-portfolio on ESL learners' writing performance. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 34*(1), 95–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2020.1745822

Beckers, J., Dolmans, D., & Van Merriënboer, J. (2016). E-portfolios enhancing students' self-directed learning: A systematic review of influencing factors. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 32*(2), 32–46. https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.2528

Cepik, S., & Yastibas, A. E. (2013). The use of e-portfolio to improve English speaking skill of Turkish EFL learners. *Anthropologist, 16*(1–2), 307–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/09720073.2013.11891358

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior. Plenum Press.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological*

Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and education: The self-determination perspective. *Educational Psychologist, 26*(3–4), 325–346. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.1991.9653137

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom.* Cambridge University Press.

Ferrance, E. (2000). *Action research.* ERIC Digest.

Fowler, F. J., Jr. (2014). *Survey research methods* (5th ed.). SAGE.

Hidi, S., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2000). Motivating the academically unmotivated: A critical issue for the 21st century. *Review of Educational Research, 70*(2), 151–179. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543070002151

Keller, J. M. (1987). Development and use of the ARCS model of instructional design. *Journal of Instructional Development, 10*(3), 2–10. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02905780

Kemmis, S., McTaggart, R., & Nixon, R. (2014). *The action research planner: Doing critical participatory action research.* Springer.

Kwok, L. (2011). College students' participation in e-portfolio learning in relation to academic ability and motivation. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 8*(2), 246–267. http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v8n22011/kwok.pdf

Lewin, K. (1946). Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues, 2*(4), 34–46. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1946.tb02295.x

Mobarhan, R., Rahman, A. A., & Majidi, M. (2015). Electronic portfolio motivational factors from students' perspective: A qualitative study. *Knowledge Management & E-Learning, 7*(2), 265–279. https://doi.org/10.34105/j.kmel.2015.07.017

Mohamad, S. N. A., Embi, M. A., & Nordin, N. M. (2016). Designing e-portfolio with ARCS motivational design strategies to enhance self-directed learning. Higher Education Studies, 6(4), 138-145. https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v6n4p138

Rezai, A., Rahul, D. R., Asif, M., Omar, A., & Jamalyar, A. R. (2022). Contributions of e-portfolios assessment to developing EFL learners' vocabulary, motivation, and attitudes. *Education Research International, 2022*, 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/5713278

Rossi, P. G., Magnoler, P., & Giannandrea, L. (2008). From an e-portfolio model to e-portfolio practices: Some guidelines. *Campus-Wide Information Systems, 25*(4), 219–232. https://doi.org/10.1108/10650740810900667

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.* Basic Books.

Wisker, G. (2001). *The postgraduate research handbook.* Palgrave.

Wolters, C. A. (2003). Regulation of motivation: Evaluating an underemphasized aspect of self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychologist, 38*(4), 189–205. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15326985EP3804_1

Yastibas, A. E., & Yastibas, G. C. (2015). The use of e-portfolio-based assessment to develop students' self-regulated learning in English language teaching. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 176*(2015), 3–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.437

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Self-efficacy: An essential motive to learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*(1), 82–91. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1016

PHAN THÙY DƯƠNG is the Head of the English Major at Sonadezi College of Technology and Management, Vietnam. She teaches English skills and has experience in curriculum design, teacher training, and assessment. Her research interests include language teaching methodology, intercultural communication, and technology integration in education.

TRẦN THANH TÚ is a lecturer at Vietnam Aviation Academy, Vietnam. His teaching and research interests include language acquisition, linguistics, and task-based learning. He has experience in materials development and collaborative research in English language teaching.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Sonadezi College of Technology and Management and Vietnam Aviation Academy for their institutional support during this study. We also sincerely thank the editor and anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and constructive feedback, which greatly contributed to improving the quality of this manuscript.

Appendix A
Translated Questions in Interviews With Students and Lecturers

Table A1
Questions for Students

Aspects	Questions
Attention	What do you find interesting in ePortfolio assessments?
	Any specific parts that really keep you focused?
Relevance	How do ePortfolio assessments connect with what you want to learn?
	Does what you put in your ePortfolios relate to your courses?
Confidence	How confident do you feel doing tasks through ePortfolios?
	Are there any experiences that made you feel more confident in your writing?
Satisfaction	What parts of ePortfolio assessments do you enjoy in your learning experience?
	Is there anything that makes using ePortfolios for writing tasks more fun for you?

Table A2
Questions for Lecturers

Aspects	Questions
Attention	How do you perceive the attention-grabbing elements in ePortfolio assessments, particularly concerning students' initial interest in writing tasks?
	Have you noticed any strategies or features within ePortfolios that effectively capture students' attention in the writing process?
Relevance	In what ways do you find ePortfolio assessments relevant to students' learning goals in writing?
	From your observations, how do the content and structure of ePortfolios align with students' understanding of the course material, making it personally meaningful?
Confidence	Reflecting on your experiences, how does the use of ePortfolios impact students' confidence in completing writing tasks?
	Can you share instances where students' confidence in their writing abilities has been positively influenced by the ePortfolio assessment approach?
Satisfaction	What aspects of the ePortfolio assessment process contribute to students' overall satisfaction with the learning experience in writing?
	From your perspective, are there specific elements within ePortfolios that enhance students' satisfaction derived from completing writing tasks?

Appendix B
Codes and Themes Related to ePortfolio Use and Student Motivation in English Writing

Raw data (excerpts)	Codes	Sub-themes	Themes (ARCS model)
"The visual progress display is like a constant reminder of my improvement. It motivates me to invest more effort in my writing." (Student 2)	Awareness of progress; Increased effort	Visual progress display	Attention
"I often revisit my earlier works; it's satisfying to see how far I've come." (Student 4)	Reflection on past work; Perceived improvement	Reflection on past work	Attention
"Students become more aware of their development when they can visually see their writing progress over time." (Lecturer 1)	Visibility of progress; Sustained attention	Visual progress display	Attention
"I appreciate that I can include visuals, like infographics, in my ePortfolio. It makes the writing more relevant to my major." (Student 1)	Multimedia use; Task relevance	Task relevance	Relevance
"Being able to choose the format adds a personal touch. It's not just an assignment." (Student 5)	Choice of format; Personal relevance	Personalized expression	Relevance
"Knowing that everything I've learned is part of the assessment makes the writing more relevant to the whole course." (Student 3)	Comprehensive assessment; Course-wide relevance	Task relevance	Relevance
"When my classmates comment or like my essays, it feels great. It makes me believe that my writing matters." (Student 6)	Peer recognition; Confidence building	Confidence built through positive reactions and achievement	Confidence
"Positive reactions encourage students to keep writing and sharing their work." (Lecturer 2)	Social feedback; Persistence	Confidence built through positive reactions	Confidence
"It's not just about getting a good grade; it's about creating something they're proud to display." (Lecturer 1)	Pride in work; Shift in motivation	Confidence built through achievement	Confidence
"When I see my ePortfolio, I feel proud of what I've accomplished." (Student 2)	Sense of achievement; Ownership	Satisfaction through ownership	Satisfaction
"Even after grades were finalized, some students continued adding and refining their portfolios." (Lecturer 2)	Voluntary engagement; Intrinsic motivation	Intrinsic motivation	Satisfaction
"It's about seeing how far I've come as a writer, not just finishing assignments." (Student 4)	Writer identity; Personal growth	Satisfaction through intrinsic motivation	Satisfaction